

REMARKS

The claims are not amended with this paper. Currently pending in the application are claims 1, 7-9, 14, 15, 19-22 and 27-29.

The Office Action

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's thorough consideration of the application and the indication that the previous rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) have been withdrawn. Applicants request further consideration in view of the remarks herein.

Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1, 7-9, 14, 15, 19-22 and 27-29 stand rejected on the grounds of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 2 and 11-15 of United States Patent No. 6,825,203. Claims 1, 9, 14, 15, 19-22 and 27 further stand provisionally rejected on the grounds of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 27-35 of copending U.S. Application Serial No. 10/823,365. The rejections are traversed.

Without agreeing with or conceding the correctness of these rejections, and solely to expedite allowance of the present application, Applicants submit herewith a terminal disclaimer over each of the cited issued patent and the cited copending application. Applicants therefore contend that the rejections have been overcome.

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner's attention is directed to the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed with this paper. Applicants note that the copending application no. 10/823,365 has been cited in the double patenting rejection discussed above. The IDS is provided to bring to the Examiner's attention a Final Office Action issued in application no. 10/823,365, rejecting all pending claims of that application. Applicants request that the Examiner consider the IDS and the reference cited and return an initialed copy of the IDS to Applicants with the next Office Action or Notice of Allowance.

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is earnestly requested.

Applicants conditionally petition for any extension of time necessary for consideration of this response. The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 04-1105, under Order No. 62072 (51590).

Respectfully submitted,

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